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# *MetroPlan 2000*

## Action Recommendations for Future Growth

**February 28, 1990**

**MAPC** Winter Council Meeting
World Trade Center • Boston

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METROPLAN 2000

POLICY COMMITTEES

| Committee | Chairperson | Staff Coordinator |
|---|---|---|
| Economic Development | Alan McClennen | Doug Carnahan |
| Housing | John Woodward | Judy Alland |
| Land Resources | Robert Brown | Joan Blaustein |
| Transportation | Richard Easler | Carol Blair |
| Water/Wastewater | Libby Bransfield | Martin Pillsbury |
| Solid Waste | William Sawyer | Nora Kelleher |
| Facility Siting | Richard Gelpke | Sara Malone |

## SUMMARY

MetroPlan 2000 is a regional development plan for the 101 communities in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region. The basic tenet of the plan is that concentrating development is economically and environmentally more practical than our current mode of scattered development.

The financial pressure placed on cities and towns by Proposition 2 1/2 pushes some communities to welcome and even pursue commercial development within their town boundaries. Unfortunately, the tax revenue generated within the host community by this development does not always equal the financial impact that the business has on the municipal infrastructure, including housing for employees, educational facilities, sewer capacity, water supply, traffic, open space, and sensitive environmental areas. Further, the impact of development in one community often overflows into neighboring communities and across the region. MAPC's regional development plan must provide a rational guide for future development which takes into account the benefits and impacts of development on both the local and regional level.

The concept of concentrated development proposed in MetroPlan 2000 consists of mixed use (residential, commercial, and industrial) development which is accessible by transportation and has access to sewer service, water supply, adequate open space, and solid waste disposal capacity. The plan identifies areas in the region which could sustain concentrated development. The first area is the urban core, or that part of the metropolitan area which is serviced by sewer and rapid transit. Other areas where development could be sustained are those which are currently experiencing growth or where growth is anticipated. These areas are called subregional growth centers.

The draft action recommendations contained in this booklet are the result of many months of the information gathering and discussion of seven policy committees. A full list of these action recommendations can be found starting on page 11. Listed below are the highlights of each policy committee's recommendations:

Housing

- o Establish Ownership Alternatives:Social Investment Solutions (OASIS), to encourage permanently affordable housing.
- o Amend the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) to establish thresholds for job development that trigger housing impact assessments.

Economic Development

- o Promote exports and development opportunities within the region in connection with the 1992 Economic Unification of Europe and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement.
- o Establish Economic Development Districts within the region to encourage communities to join together in planning and financing land use and infrastructure investment decisions.

Land Resources

- o Establish a public transit system from inner core to regional open space areas.
- o Create a Metropolitan Open Space Overlay District to preserve regional open space.

Transportation

- o Establish the Multiple Occupant Vehicle Express (MOVE) Network to provide express service by high occupancy vehicle lanes and express runs on commuter rail.
- o Revise structure of fees, fares and taxes to meet the region's transportation infrastructure needs.

Water/Wastewater

- o Support the passage of the Cohen Bill which would protect the Quabbin, Ware, and Wachusett watersheds.
- o Reduce inflow and infiltration in the region's sewer systems by enforcement and expansion of DEP's sewer bank program.

Solid Waste

- o Establish subregional solid waste districts.
- o Create a Metropolitan Area Recycling Cooperative (MARC) for marketing of recyclables generated within MAPC region.

Facility Siting

- o Inventory facility needs for the region.
- o Develop plan for siting according to MetroPlan 2000.

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## INTRODUCTION

In May of 1989, the MAPC adopted, in principle, a draft of MetroPlan 2000. The regional development plan is based on the concept of concentrating development where it can be accommodated by infrastructure. The map that appears on the following page shows the proposed development plan. The matrix on page 5 identifies the various planning areas designated by the plan and describes the infrastructure available in each.

The plan identifies seven policy areas that are important to the region: economic development, housing, land resources, transportation, water and waste water, solid waste management, and siting regional facilities. As a result of the May 1989 meeting, policy committees were formed to delve deeper into each of the seven policy areas. These committees, made up of council members and coordinated by MAPC staff, meet monthly to discuss and develop solutions to the problems facing the region. The action recommendations are presented here in draft form and will be refined further by each committee. Comments and suggestions from all council members are welcome and will be incorporated into future committee discussions.

The committees will continue to develop and refine their action recommendations over the next three months. Additional recommendations may be added and existing ones will be modified. A major focus of the committees will be to estimate the cost associated with each recommendation as well as potential sources of funding.

MAPC staff will continue to do presentations of MetroPlan 2000 and solicit member communities and agencies for their input on the plan. In May of 1990, the Council will vote on the plan in its final form. The final plan will provide the region with a policy tool with which to guide growth and development. As any good planning tool, MetroPlan 2000 is dynamic and will continue to change and be amended by the Council and its members.

*MAPC Regional Development Plan*

- Economic Core and Urban Neighborhoods
- Subregional Growth Centers
- Fully Suburbanized Growth Areas
- Suburban/Rural Area

Note: *Resource Protection overlay not shown*

# *Planning Area Matrix*

| *Planning Area* | *Utilities* | *Transit Services* | *Road Network* | *Land Use* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Urban Economic Core | • Public sewer and water<br>• Regional landfills / waste-to-energy facilities | • All modes | • Served by major corridors<br>• Significant road network in place | • Urban densities of residential development<br>• Employment center<br>• Transit center |
| Urban Neighborhoods | • Public sewer and water in centers<br>• Regional landfills / waste-to-energy facilities | • All modes<br>• High level of service | • Served by major corridors<br>• Significant road network in place | • Mixed use<br>• Higher density residential |
| Subregional Growth Centers | • Public sewer and water in centers<br>• Regional landfills / waste-to-energy facilites | • Local transit within growth center<br>• Access to regional transit<br>• Fringe parking | • Access to one or two major corridors with access to local roads | • Mixed use<br>• Medium-to-high densities of residential and non-residential |
| Fully Suburbanized Growth Areas | • Public sewer and water<br>• Regional landfills / waste-to-energy facilites | • Good access to core via fixed rail<br>• Associated fringe parking facilites<br>• Bus access to subregional growth centers | • Subregional and local roads<br>• Access to transit options and major corridors | • Medium density residential area<br>• Some mixed-use areas |
| Suburban/Rural Area | • No public sewer system<br>• Public water service generally available<br>• Regional waste-to-energy and local landfills | • Bus access to subregional growth areas<br>• Some areas with commuter rail parking | • Local roads<br>• Access to transit options and major corridors | • Medium-to-low density development<br>• Limited mixed uses |
| Resource Protection Overlays | • Depends on the policy area it overlays<br>• Waste facilities sited to protect most environmentally sensitive areas | • Depends on the policy area it overlays | • Depends on the policy area it overlays | • Public open space and recreation<br>• Agriculture<br>• Waterfront<br>• Aquifer Protection |

## SUBREGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS

Subregional growth centers are areas within the region which are currently experiencing growth or where increased level of development is expected over the next few years. MetroPlan 2000 provides a framework for development in these growth centers that is based on a concern for people, economy, and environment of the region.

The MetroPlan 2000 vision of subregional growth centers is of a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial development. The vision is one of efficient transportation, affordable housing, adequate employment, accessible open space and recreation lands, and environmentally sound water and waste water systems. More specifically, subregional growth centers should :

- o Be located at transportation nodes.
- o Be transit accessible
- o Be a mixture of residential and commercial development which achieves a ratio of one home for every 1.5 jobs within a 3-5 mile radius of the center's core.
- o Have adequate permanently affordable housing.
- o Have a development density, or floor area ratio (FAR) of at least 1.5. (A FAR of 1.5 would allow 30,000 sq ft of floor space to be built on a 20,000 sq ft lot).
- o Have adequate educational and day care facilities.
- o Have existing or potential sewer and water supply capacity to accommodate development at buildout.
- o Have existing or potential solid waste capacity.
- o Have or provide access to open space and recreation areas.
- o Have a minimum anticipated development buildout of 5 million square feet of non-residential space.

Each of these elements are linked together to create a complete center. Where certain elements are missing, the center can function but will not meet its full potential. MetroPlan 2000 brings each of these elements to currently existing and future areas of growth in the region. The plan's goal is to move away from mono-typical types of development such as commercial/employment centers and purely residential areas and to encourage a more balanced mixed use form of development. The difference between areas of growth, then, is the proportions of the various elements.

The establishment of a regional development plan for the MAPC communities is simply the first step in the the MetroPlan 2000 planning process. The implementation of the plan will be the most challenging and difficult part of the process. One method of implementation is that of channelling state and federal funds according to the priorities identified in the plan.

MAPC will work closely with state and federal agencies to encourage investment in areas of the region where development fits the elements of MetroPlan 2000. Higher priority will be given to those areas which are proceeding with mixed use development of the type described above.

Another tool for the implementation of MetroPlan 2000 is the establishment of linkage programs either on a local or state level. On the local level, for instance, communities could assure a good jobs to housing ratio by linking housing development to commercial building permits. On the state level, the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act could be amended to require impact statements for commercial development which address its impacts on housing in the area.

## METROPLAN 2000: AN OVERVIEW OF A CAPITAL BUDGET PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Evidence suggests that infrastructure is one of many factors that affect regional economic development decisions. Other major factors include available and skilled labor, land costs and the perceived quality of life for executives and professionals. Studies of business location decisions, however, reveal that the importance of infrastructure grows when choosing a specific development location. With infrastructure available in almost every urban area, it becomes a special enticement when key systems are complemented by adequate and attractively priced land, located near a population mass, but without problems associated with congestion.

The central premise of MetroPlan 2000's capital improvements plan is that economic growth will be concentrated primarily within the urban core and in subregional growth centers. By concentrating capital investments in these areas, the region's residents will be able to afford the public works required to sustain metropolitan prosperity. Land use decisions, in turn, should be oriented to where appropriate infrastructure is available or where new infrastructure development can complement existing systems.

Basic infrastructure in metropolitan Boston is comprehensive, but aged. Almost every community supports public water distribution, and about three-quarters of the communities in the metropolitan region are at least partly sewered. The MBTA's network of busses, commuter rail and rapid transit systems serve over three-quarters of MAPC's 101 communities. In addition, highways and local roads, though at times heavily congested on portions of Route 128, make all points in a geographically compact region accessible.

Unfortunately, the available sewer and water capacity is often wasted due to the age and condition of the region's infrastructure. For instance, many water and sewer pipes in the urban core date to the 19th century. Dilapidated sewer piping leads to unnecessary overloads and due to infiltration of water into the system. Permeable water pipes can lead to the loss of fresh water through leaks.

Similarly, major roadways are as many as 20-30 years old. In the past two decades only a handful of projects have been completed to increase highway capacity despite explosive employment and commuter growth. As a result, current highway design capacities fall far below current peak period traffic demands, especially in the densely developed Route 128 belt. Moreover, in the region's heavily settled cities and suburbs, transportation system expansions are complicated by the tight proximity of highway and transit right-of-ways to developed areas.

Two economic scenarios being considered as part of MetroPlan 2000: the first is "extended trends" or projected costs of infrastructure assuming the region continues to build new infrastructure to accommodate growth; the second is MetroPlan 2000, which proposes to reduce the need for additional infrastructure by encouraging the more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Figure 1 compares the annualized expenditures for the period of 1969 to 1988 and projected expenditures for 1991 to 2003, based on existing public works programs. Analysis is currently underway that will compare these expenditures with potential expenditures of an infrastructure system to support a MetroPlan 2000 development plan.

The preliminary MetroPlan 2000 infrastructure recommendations which most significantly differ from extended trends are discussed below:

* Implement conservation measures and enhancements to existing water and sewer systems before new water supply sources or new sewer systems are developed. The intention of MetroPlan 2000 is to concentrate development so that construction of new sewer systems will not be necessary. Of course, the Plan allows for deferred maintenance and extensions of existing systems.

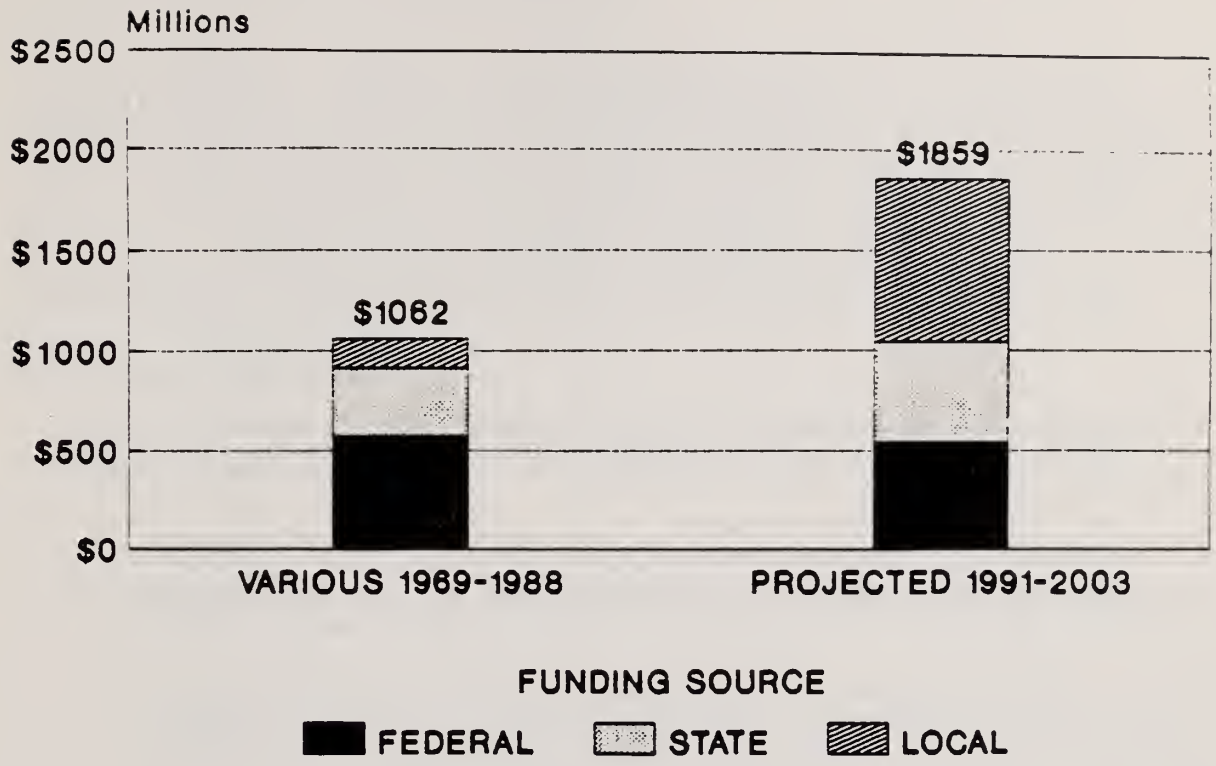
* Develop a MOVE (Multiple Occupant Vehicle Express) network of high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on major highways, vans and buses as well as fixed rail transit. MOVE will link designated subregional centers with each other and with the urban service boundary, and address the escalating congestion on the regional highways and the bottleneck in the downtown MBTA stations during the peak commute. Aside from the central artery project, new roadways are not recommended. However, the current cost estimate for MOVE's HOV network lies between $10 million and $2.4 billion, with the former assuming that HOV lanes are all taken from existing roadways and the latter assuming that extended rights-of-way and new construction are needed in all cases. For the purpose of this estimate, the midpoint of $1.2 billion is used. The HOV network will also supercede the need for the full plate of fixed-rail transit projects now being contemplated to address suburb to suburb and suburb to core commuting.

* Establish an annual pool of funding for open space acquisition and establish a separate fund for acquisitions where timing is critical as opposed to costing out a standardized per capita deficiency of open space within the urban core.

Figures 2 and 3 compare the federal, state and local share of past and projected infrastructure expenditures for the next twenty years (1991-2010) on a trends extended basis. These charts show clearly that federal burdens are being transferred to state and local funding. Given the magnitude of "extended trends" and state and local fiscal constraints, the expectation that the state and local communities can pick up the bill for federal disinvestment seems unrealistic. For instance, annual infrastructure expenditures needed to meet extended trends will be more than double spending levels in past decades,in constant dollars, while the ability to finance public works is declining.

*Figure 1*

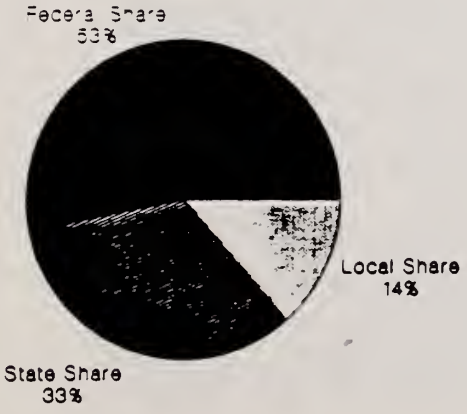
# INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES
## ANNUALIZED IN MAPC REGION




## CONSTANT 1988 DOLLARS

*Figure 2*

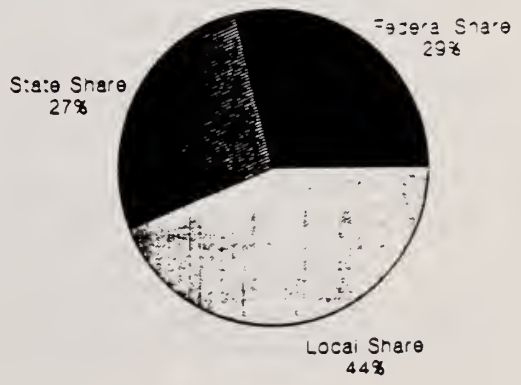
PAST INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES
Various Years within 1969-1988




In 1988 Dollars

*Figure 3*

PROJECTED INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES
BY FUNDING SOURCE: 1991-2003



## ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

*Policy Committee: Economic Development*

This committee has singled out three major issues that threaten this region's economy. They are: a mismatch between the skills offered by available workers and the skills demanded by emerging job opportunities; lack of job opportunities which can offer middle-income wages to those lacking college educations; and inadequate local, regional and state control over the development process and infrastructure investment. From these issues the Economic Development committee formulated several recommendations, some of which would involve a central role for MAPC.

Action Recommendation #1:

**Require municipalities to file a disclosure whenever a proposed new use of vacant or underutilized industrial land is non-industrial.**

Objective: To treat vacant or underutilized land zoned as industrial as a precious resource and preserve the potential for future expansion of manufacturing jobs since many such jobs pay middle-income wages to workers with less than college education.

Implementation: Passage of state legislation to create a review process analogous to the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA). Regulatory authority vested in a regional planning agency could disallow the use of vacant land zoned industrial for a non-industrial purpose such as office or R&D unrelated to local manufacturing.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Form economic development districts in which two or more communities coordinate their land use decisions and the planning and financing of infrastructure investments.**

Objective: To locate new developments based on available infrastructure capacity or the potential for efficient expansion of infrastructure. To encourage the coordination of land use decisions that allow the growth of new housing and employment geographically close to each other with the development costs and benefits shared equitably between communities.

Implementation: Passage of state legislation that would allow communities to give up some of their local powers to a multi-community entity in return for greater control and coordination over development decisions beyond their own borders. Technical assistance to groups of communities by state and regional planning agency staff in forming economic districts.

Action Recommendation #3:

**"Meter" the quantity, type, and geographic location of pending commercial projects by monitoring the existing level of vacant floor space and the rate at which new space is being absorbed.**

Objective: To evaluate the appropriateness of new development sites in relation to infrastructure capacity and the current demand and supply for commercial space.

Implementation: Using its review authority under legislative statutes such as MEPA, MAPC will disapprove new developments which are inconsistent with MetroPlan 2000, especially at locations lacking infrastructure capacity or with an oversupply of commercial space. State and regional agencies and municipalities will be encouraged to develop investment and growth policies which support MetroPlan 2000.

Action Recommendation #4:

**Levy higher property-tax rates on land than on buildings to boost and guide commercial and residential development.**

Objective: To concentrate development in existing urbanized areas, while encouraging the preservation of open land in more suburban areas. To increase the production of affordable housing through a financial incentive for property owners to make use of vacant and underutilized non-industrial building sites. To promote equity by requiring owners of vacant land, who benefit from development around them, to pay their fair share of taxes.

Implementation: Amend existing tax laws to allow communities the option of levying higher property-tax rates on land than on buildings in areas where development is desired.

Action Recommendation #5:

**Promote abroad the exports and development opportunities within this region, especially in connection with the 1992 Economic Unification of Europe and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement.**

Objective: To increase the volume of the region's exports and foreign investments in new commercial development so as to expand the job and income prospects of its residents.

Implementation: Identify and promote corporations and their products with high-export potential and emerging market opportunities abroad. Improve the marketing of commercial opportunities within the region through joint cooperative endeavors with state and local governments, MAPC, and corporate trade and real estate associations.

Action Recommendation #6:

**Bolster the global and national competitiveness of our region's workforce through strategic expenditures for public education.**

Objective: To support local schools and social services for students. Decrease the incidence of school drop-out and raise the skills of graduates in math and science. Expand access to career employment and employment/educational opportunities. Provide community-based affordable and accessible entry level college education, one and two year vocational training programs, and remedial education.

Implementation: Increase state funding for support of dependent care programs/allowances and the community college system, and for reform of the local aid formula to provide more stable and increased school funding to communities with large numbers of economically or culturally disadvantaged students.

Action Recommendation #7:

**Amend Proposition 2 1/2 to tie allowed annual growth in municipal expenditures to reflect changes in the cost of living affecting municipal service delivery.**

Objective: To reduce the financial imperative for communities to seek new commercial growth to enhance their local tax base to the detriment of other public goals.

Implementation: Work to amend Proposition 2 1/2 so as to reflect inflation-adjusted cost increases in municipal service delivery.

*Policy Committee: Housing*

Adequate and affordable housing is a critical piece of the region's development plan for the future. The action recommendations present programs and concepts that address the most pressing housing issues facing the region: an insufficient supply of housing to accommodate the future employment growth in the region; an inability of communities to meet the required 10% affordable goal; and inability to keep housing permanently affordable.

Action Recommendation #1:

**Identify areas where anticipated job growth or existing jobs/housing imbalance put pressure on housing stock & traffic and where the private sector has an incentive (labor availability, project approval, etc.) to cooperate.**

Objective: To seek balance between housing and jobs, thereby reducing commuting and the resultant traffic congestion, energy use, and pollution.

Implementation: Initiate jobs/housing balance awareness; publicize data; determine "balance"; design mechanisms to ensure balance and to involve the private sector; work with public and private sector to implement.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Establish thresholds, under part of MEPA, where job development affects housing; define and require a Housing Impacts Statement; and specify appropriate mitigation measures (e.g., linkage); subject to RPA review. Inter-community impacts should be considered.**

Objective: To ensure that housing is developed in conjunction with job growth, thus ensuring an available workforce and minimizing increased commuting and its negative impacts.

Implementation: MAPC will lead fact-finding initiative and develop support; sponsor legislation and/or regulatory changes.

Action Recommendation #3:

**Prioritize, according to a regional plan, infrastructure investments and package treatment plant permits to fill affordable housing deficiencies and ensure jobs/housing balance in growth areas. Reward affordable housing production through increased state aid.**

Objective: To ensure that affordable housing and jobs/housing balance are feasible in light of resource limitations by providing incentives.

Implementation: Work with state agencies, legislators, and others to develop procedures for prioritizing investments according to MetroPlan 2000 and to modify the state aid formula where necessary.

Action Recommendation #4:

Establish a regional review process for local zoning laws. Require inclusionary zoning, with incentives to communities and developers.

Objective: To ensure adequate housing, especially affordable housing, in every community.

Implementation: Change Ch. 40A, Section 9, to allow communities to require inclusionary housing.

Action Recommendation #5:

Initiate a "New Fund Incubator" to identify and develop new funding sources such as new lending initiatives; pension funds; private business, unions, and developers; and locally generated funds.

Objective: To develop new funding and financing sources to create and preserve affordable housing.

Implementation: MAPC brings together key public and private actors (government officials, lenders, corporations, etc.), leads action teams, participates in pilots.

Action Recommendation #6:

Set up "MetroFund" to solicit and award public and private housing contributions and equity investments.

Objective: To undertake an aggressive effort to raise money for housing.

Implementation: MAPC brings together key public and private actors, seeks partners, participates in establishing fund and tapping sources.

Action Recommendation #7:

Set up "MetroCorp," a regional non-profit organization to develop and own housing and coordinate activities with existing institutions.

Objective: To provide an intermediary to channel housing resources, provide services, and ensure long-term affordability.

Implementation: MAPC brings together public and private interests, seeks partners, participates in establishing MetroCorp.

Action Recommendation #8:

Found "OASIS" (Ownership Alternatives: Social Investment Solutions), a task force which would devise policy guidelines, design programs, and assure adequate funding for permanently affordable housing.

Objective: To create and encourage implementation of "forever" housing models which keep housing permanently affordable.

Implementation: MAPC brings together public, private, and non-profit interests, determines gaps in existing resources, lobbies state and federal government for changes in how money is spent and how programs are designed.

Action Recommendation #9:

Set up a "Housing Opportunities Strike Force".

Objective: To take advantage of immediate opportunities (e.g., unsold condos) and respond to problems (e.g., expiring use properties).

Implementation: In conjunction with Recommendations #6-8, MAPC sets up a group to participate in and monitor housing activities throughout the region and to have emergency status and access to resources of MetroFund, MetroCorp, and OASIS.

Action Recommendation #10:

Provide technical assistance to local communities. To the extent feasible, such assistance should be provided on a subregional basis and should focus on in-depth, on-going exploration of new techniques.

Objective: To ensure local and subregional leadership in housing activities.

Implementation: MAPC designs a series of outreach programs focussed on specific tools and strategies communities/subregions need to develop affordable housing.

*Policy Committee: Land Resources*

Every activity that occurs within the region takes place on the land. The land resources action recommendations were developed to address critical issues facing the region; protection of open space, promoting land use patterns that minimize costly sprawl, slowing the loss of agriculture and forested lands and protecting environmentally sensitive lands.

A. THE REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PROGRAM

Action Recommendation #1:

**Create a Metropolitan Open Space Overlay to preserve a linked network of open areas throughout the region.**

**The Overlay is a two part effort. The first is a plan which identifies areas of critical environmental concern, unique landscape features and areas required to fulfill local and regional open space/recreational needs. Its other component is a set of implementation guidelines which encompasses actions by local, regional, state and federal agencies and governments, as well as private developers and non-profit organizations.**

Objective: To preserve open areas for environmental protection and recreational needs.

Implementation: Adoption or endorsement, in whole or in part, by communities, agencies and the private sector. The purpose of adoption by communities and agencies is to incorporate the protection of these areas into local master plans, open space plans and local zoning, where appropriate.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Support the MDC Land Acquisition Program**

**The MDC has identified 3,669 acres it would like to acquire. This acreage includes recreation sites as well as areas for environmental protection.**

Objective: To reduce the deficit of regional open space.

Implementation: Action by the MDC.

Action Recommendation #3:

**Improve access to major areas of regional open space.**

**The deficit of regional open space in the MAPC Inner Core subregion (as determined by applying open space standards to the subregions) is in the range of 13,000 acres. It is unrealistic to expect that urban areas can support the same level of open space as suburban and rural areas. Therefore, access to areas of regional open space within and beyond the Inner Core should be improved.**

Objective: To provide additional opportunities for recreation to Inner Core residents.

Implementation: MAPC works with transportation agencies and open space providers to develop system and locate funding. Possibilities include: establishing public transit, publicizing existing transit through educational materials, and coordinating transit planning with open space planning.

Action Recommendation #4:

Support the completion of the Bay Circuit.

The Bay Circuit has the potential for being a major regional open space resource. The implementation of the Bay Circuit should be a priority at the local and state level. Acquisitions of regional open space ( federal, state, MDC and non-profits) beyond the Inner Core should be targeted for the Bay Circuit.

Objective: To provide recreational opportunities, help to protect the environment and to define the character of the region.

Implementation: Primarily state and local actions.

B. SUBREGIONAL LAND RESOURCES PROGRAMS

Action Recommendation #5:

Form an Inner Core Greenspace Alliance.

Objective: To increase the amount of open space and recreational land in the Inner Core subregion.

Implementation: MAPC, through the Inner Core subregion, should act as the catalyst for forming an Inner Core Greenspace Alliance modeled after the Boston Greenspace. MDC should have a major role.

Action Recommendation #6:

Promote Subregional Greenspace Alliances

The model of an Inner Core Greenspace Alliance is applicable to any subregion. The MAPC subregions could play a major role in bringing together the many land conservation groups active throughout the subregion.

Objective: To coordinate and focus the activities of land conservation groups on issues of subregional importance.

Implementation: Formation of new alliances.

Action Recommendation #7:

Plan for sufficient local open space in Subregional Growth Centers.

Subregional growth centers should have sufficient land available for local open space needs or the potential for securing that land. Open space preservation should be achieved both by public acquisition of lands and through the design of private developments, as well as public regulation of land. The open space system should be designed to provide active recreation, environmental protection as well as pathways and common area.

Objective: To ensure sufficient local open space to accommodate planned growth in the subregional growth centers.

Implementation: Master plans, regulations, land acquisition, design review.

Action Recommendation #8:

Subregions should identify environmental, scenic and historic resources for protection.

Identification of environmentally sensitive and unique scenic and historic areas is a first step in developing priorities for protection, preservation and funding. The subregions should identify linked areas or corridors within each subregion or between subregions, to establish priorities.

There are two state programs relating to areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC's): the Coastal ACEC program and the Inland ACEC program. For the purposes of environmental resource protection, the process for identifying and nominating state-designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) should be used by the subregions.

There should be a similar effort by the subregions to identify scenic and historic resources and to utilize existing local and state regulations and programs to protect these resources.

Objective: To protect environmental, scenic and historic resources in the subregions.

Implementation: Action by the subregions.

C. LOCAL LAND RESOURCES PROGRAM

Action Recommendation #9:

Encourage implementation of local open space plans.

All communities should have a current open space plan which is approved by the state Division of Conservation Services. These plans ensure eligibility for state funding programs and provide communities with concrete action plans for achieving their open space and recreation objectives. The open space plans should be consistent with the open space and land resources recommendations of the regional development plan.

Objective: To ensure that local needs for open space, recreation and environmental protection are met.

Implementation: Action by communities.

Action Recommendation #10:

Establish a procedure for monitoring the potential conversion of industrially zoned lands.

Objective: Prevent the loss of industrially zoned lands.

Implementation: MAPC should develop a tracking system which would allow it to keep abreast of the issue and to intervene if desirable. Monitoring could be done through review and analysis of all the notices of proposed zoning changes which MAPC currently receives.

Action Recommendation #11:

Require that all communities have master plans which are consistent with the regional development plan and subregional plans, if any.

Master plans are an important tool which enables communities to identify and set short and long term goals for land use and development issues. Although the focus and contents of a master plan will differ from community to community, the following items which address MetroPlan 2000 concerns should be included:

a) A build-out analysis.
b) Regional and local open space and environmental protection needs.
c) The potential use of federal and state surplus lands.
d) The preservation of agricultural areas.
e) Industrially-zoned lands.
f) River basin concerns.

Objective: To ensure wise use of the land through long-range planning.

Implementation: Support Growth Commission recommendations regarding local master plans.

## D. STATE ASSISTANCE IN LAND RESOURCES PLANNING

Action Recommendation #12:

MAPC and the subregions should lobby for a state-wide land transfer tax to fund open space and housing.

A state-wide enabling bill, which includes both open space and housing, should be passed. This local option bill would enable communities to raise funds in two areas of concern to MetroPlan 2000; affordable housing and open space. The MAPC Executive Committee has adopted a policy of support for a land transfer tax which mandates 25% funding for open space, 25% for housing and 50% to be determined by the municipality. The state should also consider the possibility of a 10% set-aside for a fund for timely acquisition of critical parcels.

Objective: To provide funding for local actions on housing and open space.

Implementation: Lobbying by MAPC and the subregions.

Action Recommendation #13:

Establish a procedure for the timely acquisition of threatened parcels.

Because of competition for land, many parcels of valuable open space are lost because federal, state or local dollars are not available in a timely manner and must wait for grant application deadlines, grant processing time or town meeting/city council action. A procedure should be established which bypasses the usual red tape and allows for acquisition of critical parcels when this becomes necessary.

Objective: To avoid losing opportunities for the purchase of open space.

Implementation: Coordination and cooperation among key land protection agencies and organizations. Possibilities include setting aside a special pool of money outside of annual state and federal grant processes, to be available when timing is the critical issue and cooperative agreements between the state and local governments and private non-profit organizations which have the ability to move quickly to acquire land and have more flexibility in financing.

Action Recommendation #14:

Retain federal and state "surplus" lands for long-term public benefits.

There are many parcels of federal and state lands which have been declared surplus. The procedure for disposition of surplus lands involves seeking public uses first and then putting the land on the private market. The process for the disposition of federal and state surplus lands should always place the highest priority on retaining those parcels in a public use.

Objective: To retain public lands for public uses.

Implementation: Unknown.

## E. ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AT ALL LEVELS

Action Recommendation #15:

Preserve 10,000 acres of agricultural land by 2010.

In 1971, approximately 51,371 acres of land in the MAPC region were devoted to agriculture. By 1985, this had decreased to 46,565 acres or 5% of the region's total acreage. It is not known how much of this acreage is currently permanently protected. All open space preservation agencies and organizations, including the non-profit sector and municipalities, should work towards a goal of 10,000 acres of permanently protected agricultural land by 2010. This goal will need to include use of the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, acquisition by communities exercising their right of first refusal under Chapter 61A and the formation of Agricultural Incentive Areas.

Objective: To preserve agricultural lands.

Implementation: Chapter 61A should be amended to allow a portion of the payments made under the provisions for collecting back taxes be put into a local fund which would be used to assist the town in purchasing agricultural lands.

Action Recommendation #16:

Integrate the protection of critical environmental resources into all local bylaws and state regulations.

Environmental criteria should be applied to all land use planning decisions. All aquifer protection regulations should be developed from a regional perspective since aquifer boundaries do not respect municipal boundaries. The state should continue to fund the Aquifer Lands Acquisition Program.

Objective: To protect environmental resources including aquifer recharge areas, prime wildlife habitats, floodplains, and wetlands.

Implementation: Local bylaws; assistance from the state.

Action Recommendation #17:

All coastal communities should review their zoning bylaws and master plans to take into account coastal issues.

The coast is a unique resource which requires protection by planning and regulatory measures which are tailored to specific coastal issues. These specific coastal concerns are: sea level rise, barrier beaches, public access to the waterfront, shellfishing and storm protection.

Objective: Protection of coastal resources.

Implementation: All coastal communities should work closely with the Office of Coastal Zone Management when preparing master plans and revising zoning bylaws.

Action Recommendation # 18:

Land use planning at all levels should consider river basins as a planning unit.

Communities should take river basin boundaries into account when planning and making development decisions. River basins should be considered as part of any master plans. Communities should work with watershed associations and the subregions to further river basin planning.

Objective: To protect water and related land resources through appropriate land use planning.

Implementation: Local and subregional cooperation.

*Policy Committee: Transportation*

The transportation committee has struggled with the issues of congestion,air quality, deterioration of infrastructure, and funding shortfalls. We have also worked with the trend toward longer commutes --the majority within the region being from one suburb to another and often not served by public transportation. In the following action recommendations we place our hopes in consolidating travel demand to a strong core and subregional centers. We expect that, in this environment, carpooling, vanpooling, walking and bicycling will be feasible to a far greater extent than it is today. The action agenda proposes a transportation plan and land use strategy to make this work

Action Recommendation #1:

**Develop the Transportation Plan, including capital plan and project prioritization, using the vision offered by MetroPlan 2000.**

Objective: To establish clear priorities for projects which support a strong urban core and subregional growth centers.

Implementation: The Metropolitan Planning Organization would develop the new Transportation Plan using the vision offered by MetroPlan 2000 and infrastructure investments of all state agencies will be based on this plan.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Establish the Multiple Occupant Vehicle Express (MOVE) network to provide express service by High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane (carpools, vanpools, busses) and express runs on commuter rail.**

Objective: Efficient transportation in the suburbs will only be feasible with the increased densities and mixed use recommended for the subregional growth centers. The MOVE network offers sufficient travel time benefits to those locating in the centers to induce that mix.

Implementation: The MPO would establish the MOVE Network and circulation within the core and suburban centers as the heart of the new Transportation Plan. If tolls are required to build the network, the Legislature would establish enabling legislation for an existing or new authority.

Action Recommendation #3:

**Restructure fares, fees and taxes which support transportation facilities and services to establish adequate and equitable transportation funding.**

Objective: To assure that the gas tax, MBTA fares and operating subsidies, and other diverse forms of revenue meet the region's needs for investment, maintenance and services. Furthermore, the impacts of these charges are often out-of-line with the incidence of benefits and/or the ability to pay, increased user charges and more carefully directed subsidies would be used to address both of these issues.

Implementation: 1) The gas tax would be raised and dedicated to transportation uses; 2) transit fares would be increased, together with a specific reduced fare program funded by social service agencies; 3) MBTA operating subsidies would be reallocated to communities and the state, in consideration of the benefits to commuters and communities within and outside the MBTA district, whether or not service is provided within that community; and 4) tolls would be established for new expressway facilities and improvements.

Action Recommendation #4:

**Support mechanisms such as excise taxes and impact fees which allow communities to better direct land use development.**

Objective: To encourage appropriate land use development and discourage that which does not further masterplan goals. Local land use plans and subregional infrastructure priorities should realize the MetroPlan 2000 concept.

Implementation: MAPC determines which enabling acts and programs would meet the needs of all policy areas and lobby appropriately. Local parking regulations, excise taxes, impact fees, mandatory traffic mitigation, and other mechanisms should be considered.

*Policy Committee: Water/Wastewater*

The water/wastewater policy committee had the task of addressing both water supply and wastewater treatment issues. Discussion ranged from protection of surface and ground water supplies to quantification of available sewer capacity in the region. The action recommendations propose that the region focus on the maintenance and upgrading of existing water and wastewater conduit and treatment systems in order to provide adequate service to the region.

A. WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Action Recommendation #1:

**Prioritize wastewater infrastructure investments in accordance with the land use and development guidelines of MetroPlan 2000.**

Objective: To encourage growth in areas designated by the plan; to discourage sprawl; and to make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure in the region and minimize the cost of providing and maintaining wastewater infrastructure to serve existing and new development.

Implementation: Revise grant procedure under the Hayes Act, which requires that wastewater infrastructure plans be consistent with state, regional, and local water resource and wastewater planning requirements. The Act also requires that land use and other controls be consistent with the wastewater system service population projected in the facility plan.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Enforce and expand DEP's sewer bank program requiring I/I removal, encourage local control of illegal sources of inflow, and encourage funding of priority I/I improvements in impacted systems.**

Objective: To reduce inflow and infiltration (I/I) in region's wastewater systems to accommodate existing and future demands for wastewater conveyance and treatment. To promote efficient use of existing infrastructure, and to reduce peak demands which lead to water quality violations due to system overflows and/or treatment plant upsets.

Implementation: Work with DEP, local communities and EPA grant programs to develop a regional I/I reduction program.

Action Recommendation #3:

**Develop inter-municipal agreements for disposal of septage at existing wastewater treatment facilities and/or development of new septage treatment facilities.**

Objective: To protect public health and water quality by providing for the treatment and disposal of septage generated by on-lot septic systems.

Implementation: MAPC works with communities, sewer districts and private haulers to quantify regional capacity needs. MAPC coordinates subregional contracts with existing or potential disposal facilities.

Action Recommendation #4:

**Develop facilities for the disposal of sewage sludge and other residuals, with priority given to methods involving beneficial reuse** where economically and environmentally feasible.

Objective: To protect public health and water quality by providing for the safe disposal and/or beneficial reuse of residuals.

Implementation: MAPC promotes and facilitates regional pursuit of facility development.

Action Recommendation #5:

**Upgrade inadequate wastewater collection systems.**

Objective: To provide for adequate capacity for collection of existing and projected wastewater flows, and avoid surcharging and overflows in wastewater collection systems. To reduce or eliminate combined sewer overflows which allow untreated sewage to be discharged into surface waters.

Implementation: MAPC provides technical assistance. Upgrades to be conducted by each wastewater system.

B. WATER SUPPLY

Action Recommendation # 6:

**Control significant sources of non-point pollution which adversely impact critical water bodies.**

Objective: To improve water quality in critical water bodies such as drinking water sources, shellfish beds, critical fisheries, and swimming beaches impacted by non-point sources of pollution.

Implementation: Implementation of Best Management Practices to control non-point sources through local land use controls; control of major urban runoff sources in critical watersheds through NPDES permits.

Action Recommendation #7:

**Implement comprehensive water conservation measures, including leak detection and repair, full metering, ascending block water rates, industrial and commercial conservation, drought contingency plans,and public education.**

Objective: To ensure adequate supplies of potable water to meet existing and projected demands, making most efficient use of existing water sources and minimizing the cost of system expansion.

Implementation: MAPC works with MWRA and local sewer districts to provide technical assistance to water users in the region.

Action Recommendation #8:

**Protect existing and potential water supply sources through local land use controls.**

Objective: To protect public health and ensure that existing and potential water supplies in the region remain viable sources of public supply in the long term; to avoid additional costs of water treatment and/or developing new sources of water.

Implementation: Adoption of local measures to protect aquifers, wellhead areas, reservoirs, and their watersheds, including zoning bylaws, subdivision and site plan review, general bylaws, health regulations, and land acquisition. Resources of regional significance should be protected by coordinated action of the affected communities through the subregions or other appropriate mechanism. Developments of regional impact should be reviewed for water quality impacts. The Quabbin/Ware/Wachusett watersheds should be protected by adoption of the Cohen bill in the state legislature.

Action Recommendation #9:

**Seek cost savings and efficiencies through regional cooperation in meeting the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act amendments.**

Objective: To reduce the cost to community water systems of meeting the requirements for water quality monitoring and water treatment under the amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Implementation: Working with the DEP and the community water systems, MAPC should review the impacts of SDWA requirements on local water systems and evaluate the opportunities for regional cooperation. Where such opportunities exist, MAPC should facilitate their implementation through the subregions or other regional mechanisms. State grant programs should provide incentives for regional cooperation.

Action Recommendation # 10:

**Communities should prepare Water Resources Management Plans following the guidelines of the Water Resources Commission.**

Objective: To assess the water resources in each community and evaluate present and future needs, as a basis for guiding growth in the community.

Implementation: Each community designates a Water Resources Management coordinator responsible for preparing the plan with the cooperation of local boards and MAPC.

C. WATER AND SEWER

Action Recommendation # 11:

**Water and Sewer districts should adopt rates which provide for full cost recovery of all operation, maintenance, and capital costs, with " life line" rates for low income residents.**

Objective: To provide adequate financial resources for the maintenance and upgrading of water and sewer infrastructure and avoid reliance on general revenues.

Action Recommendation # 12:

**Establish impact fee systems in communities experiencing growth in demand for water and sewer services to offset part of the cost of providing additional infrastructure.**

Objective: To provide financial resources to meet increasing demands for water and sewer infrastructure capacity.

Implementation: MAPC works with water and sewer districts to develop model fee systems for new customers that reflect the cost of providing additional capacity.

Action Recommendation # 13:

**Amend the tax code to allow for deductions for water and sewer user fees.**

Objective: To reduce the financial impact of increasing water and sewer rates.

Implementation: Legislative amendments.

*Policy Committee: Solid Waste Management*

Solid waste disposal is a problem we can no longer ignore. The solid waste committee looked very closely at regional generation rates and current disposal practices in the region and determined that more than one third of the MAPC communities will run out of solid waste disposal capacity within the next ten years. The action recommendations propose that communities join together to develop integrated solid waste management systems to address their capacity deficit.

Action Recommendation #1:

**Establish subregional solid waste management districts for planning and facility procurement.**

Objective: To institute regional comprehensive waste management systems. And, assist sub-regions or a group of communities in addressing their solid waste disposal shortfalls.

Implementation: MAPC will work with communities to develop short and long term waste management plans. MAPC will initiate and coordinate interaction between communities and assist communities in establishing inter-community organizational structures.

Action Recommendation #2:

**Develop the required additional solid waste management facilities:**

Objective: To ensure that waste generated within the region is properly disposed of within the region or within a reasonable hauling distance while, promoting a 25% recycling and a 5% leaf and yard waste composting effort through out the region.

Implementation: When working with the sub-regional solid waste districts MAPC will encourage all communities to cooperatively develop Material Recycling Facilities (MRF) to reach and maintain a higher level of recycling throughout region. Likewise, among communities without long term waste disposal capacities we will encourage the development of additional facilities to handle these capacity shortfalls. MAPC will assist communities in developing RFP's, handling difficult bidding laws and creating innovative financial packages.

Action Recommendation #3:

**Establish Metropolitan Area Recycling Cooperative (MARC).**

Objective: To facilitate the consistent marketing of recyclable materials for communities within MAPC region.

Implementation: MAPC will set up long term contracts with materials markets which establish material specifications and guarantee floor prices for all participating communities.

Action Recommendation #4:

**Promote public education regarding integrated solid waste management:**

Objective: Assist communities in making wise waste management choices.

Implementation: Develop and publicize a technical information clearinghouse (resource center) at MAPC. The clearinghouse would include state-of-the-art source reduction, recycling and composting system information including collection, processing and marketing components.

Action Recommendation #5:

**Establish leaf composting programs in all MAPC communities.**

Objective: Remove at least 5% of the organic fraction of the waste stream and reduce the amount of waste disposed of and therefore paid for by communities.

Implementation: Identify communities not yet composting leaves. Work with them to register sites for composting. Engage communities in the DEP "Master Composter" program.

*Policy Committee: Facility Siting*

Siting of facilities has become increasingly difficult as problems ranging from prison overcrowding, lack of parking along commuter routes and lack of waste disposal facilities remain unresolved. There is a need in our region to improve and streamline siting processes to ensure successful development of needed projects. Many of the problems encountered today center on perceived need for additional facilities, fairness in existing processes, and the lack of coordination between various siting entities.

MAPC as a regional planning agency has the unique capacity to address many of these issues. The following recommendations reflect this committee's opinion that MAPC can and should take a proactive role in the siting of necessary regional facilities.

Action Recommendation #1:

**MAPC will identify the need for critical facilities and alternative sites in MetroPlan 2000 and advocate development of these facilities.**

**There does not exist -- (a) in the public domain, (b) in one central location, and (c) for major public facilities -- an integrated program with a comprehensive view for the determination of need for additional regional facilities. No comprehensive efforts has been made to identify environmentally, economically or socially inappropriate or unfair locations for needed facilities on a regional basis. Necessary facilities are not being sited partly through lack of objective voices to demonstrate need and promote reasonable solutions.**

Objective: To equitably site necessary regional facilities.

Implementation: Require compliance with a comprehensive regional plan, to be developed by MAPC, that addresses issues of regional and intercommunity significance. MAPC will identify and assess capacity of current facilities, current needs of communities, and projected needs of region within the plan.

Action Recommendation #2:

**MAPC will promote resource conservation, recycling and reuse programs for environmental resources. For human resources, the Council's policy will encourage maintenance of individuals within the community.**

**If people are convinced that all actions have been taken to reduce the need they are more likely to support the expansion or construction of new projects.**

Objective: To reduce the need for costly new facilities.

Implementation: MAPC will work with state and non-profit agencies to implement and utilize programs such as source reduction (DEM), employment placement programs (DMH) and recycling programs (DEP). MAPC would need to increase staff expertise in social planning issues.

Action Recommendation #3:

**MAPC will promote the use of surplus capacity in existing facilities; and the reuse, upgrade and expansion of existing facilities.**

**Expanding existing facilities and utilizing surplus capacity are more efficient, appropriate, and politically and administratively easier than siting and constructing new facilities.**

Objective: Minimize need for new facilities while addressing need for additional capacity.

Implementation: MAPC will advocate development of a review process which forces new facility proposals to address need. This would require proponents to look at available capacity and possible and proposed expansions to meet need. This could be required under the alternative scenarios in a MEPA review process. MAPC's GIS could be developed as a support and source for this information.

Action Recommendation #4:

**MAPC will advocate modification of existing siting processes to incorporate community input, technical assistance to communities for review of potential impacts, and financial or other compensation for impacts.**

**The existing patchwork of siting regulations consider different criteria, different geographic areas, and may not consider public acceptance. There is no single appropriate siting process, but there are elements that should be incorporated in all siting processes to assure an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.**

Objective: To foster trust and cooperation in all siting processes.

Implementation: Require proponent to compensate communities for acceptance of facilities. Such compensation may include local monitoring, oversight, inspection, enforcement powers and responsibilities, as well as financial compensation.

Require the proponent to provide technical assistance grants to communities so that they can hire their own independent expert to conduct the risk analysis and/or prepare the environmental impact report.

Require that citizens be involved in the location of facilities in their community - all safety and environmental issues being equal - even if costs incurred by the proponent vary.

Require that communities benefitting from regional facilities not located in their community should compensate the community hosting the facility.

Require compensation for communities negatively impacted by regional facilities located in neighboring communities.

Action Recommendation #5:

**Establish a process that requires that committees be formed to negotiate siting of facilities and that these committees be activated early in the siting process. The committees should include members of grass roots organizations, local officials, citizens, representatives of MAPC, representatives of the regulatory authority and the proponent.**

**Public opposition to controversial facilities is often the most formidable obstacle to successful siting of regional facilities. In many cases those affected by a siting are brought into the process after major decisions affecting their interests have been finalized.**

Objective: To encourage successful and acceptable siting of controversial facilities.

Implementation: MAPC will work with siting agencies to identify appropriate role of committees and revise statutes to include committees in all siting processes.